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PP RUEHFK RUEHKSO RUEHNAG RUEHNH
DE RUEHKO #3094/01 3120125
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 070125Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8610
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/USDOJ WASHDC PRIORITY
RULSDMK/USDOT WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 08 TOKYO 003094

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FAS/ITP FOR SCHROETER; PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR;
CINCPAC FLT/PA/ COMNAVFORJAPAN/PA.

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [JA](#)

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1) Ambassador Schieffer: "Next administration will also value U.S.-Japan relations"

NIKKEI (Page 9) (Full)
November 7, 2008

U.S. Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer held a press conference in Tokyo yesterday following the U.S. presidential election. In it, he noted: "I am confident that President Obama will value and nurture the U.S.-Japan alliance and friendship just as President Bush did." This showed the Ambassador's consideration to Japan's concern that Japan-U.S. relations might weaken with the establishment of a Democratic administration in the United States for the first time in eight years. The Ambassador also indicated that he would retire from his post when the term of the Bush administration expires in January.

2) U.S. President-elect Obama starts forming team for transition; Lineup of Japan specialists will change

YOMIURI (Page 3) (Full)
November 7, 2008

The lineup of Japan experts guiding the Bush administration's policy

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of strengthening the alliance with Japan will soon change to one composed of Japan specialists having ties with the Democratic Party.

Richard Danzig, a former secretary of the U.S. Navy who is rumored for defense secretary or national security adviser in the Obama cabinet, will likely become the key official in charge of security affairs in the next U.S. government. Although Danzig is not a Japan specialist, he is well-versed in the Asia-Pacific situation through his military affairs background. As a senior national security advisor to President-elect Barack Obama, he has recently spoken proactively about the Japan-U.S. alliance.

The Japanese government expects that Danzig will serve in the new government as an official similar to former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, an influential Japan expert.

With China's recent rapid economic growth, there has been a surge in China experts in the United States, outpacing the number of Japan experts. In the Obama administration, as well, Jeffrey Bader, China expert and former deputy assistant secretary of state, will be in charge of Asia policy, including Japan. In the next government, as well, officials who are not traditional Japan experts, will likely lead Japan policy.

3) With Obama winning U.S. presidential election, DPJ hoping to capture tailwind effect

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)
November 7, 2008

With the victory of Democratic Senator Barack Obama in the U.S. presidential election, the DPJ is pinning high hopes there will be a tailwind effect that would help bring about a change of administration in Japan, as well. The party has criticized the LDP-New Komeito administration as blindly following the U.S. lead. However, when it comes to the DPJ's own political strategy toward the U.S., there are many unclear areas. Even if it snatched power in the next general election, how to manage the bilateral relationship with the U.S. will emerge as a heavy load for the DPJ.

DPJ Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama was wild with joy over Obama's victory, saying in a speech given at a meeting of lawmakers on November 6, "The DPJ congratulates Mr. Obama on his victory from

this side of the Pacific." With pumped up expectations for a change of administration in Japan as well, he added, "It is wonderful for Mr. Obama to have achieved a change of administration, based on two-party politics."

Other opposition parties also hailed Obama's victory. Social Democratic Party President Fukushima noted, "Now, it's Japan's turn." People's New Party Secretary General Hisaoki Kamei commented, "The change of power in the U.S. will no doubt have an impact on Japanese voters." Chairperson Shii of the Japanese Communist Party, which keeps a distance from the DPJ-led policy platform, said with certainty, "People have handed down a 'no' verdict to the Bush Administration."

However, even if the DPJ takes over the reins of government, it would face a difficult challenge of how to build Japan-U.S. relations, as Deputy DPJ President Seiji Maehara noted: "There is a strong possibility of global financial turmoil leading to

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destabilization on the security front."

The focus is on Obama's approach to the war on terror in Afghanistan, which he regards as the main battlefield. The DPJ is opposing a bill extending refueling operations in the Indian Ocean by the Self-Defense Forces. It instead proposed dispatching SDF personnel to areas where the half of conflicts is agreed upon in Afghanistan for humanitarian assistance. The ruling parties lashed out at the proposal as lacking reality.

The DPJ's position is that it is possible for Japan to engage in overseas activities involving the use of force, as long as there is a UN resolution. However, there are many vague points about this position, including whether the party in taking this stance would give consideration to members who previously belonged to the Japan Socialist Party. In addition, there is the question of who would be dispatched: SDF personnel or members of a separate specialized organization. Though the DPJ is the top party in the Upper House, it does not hold a simple majority. As such, another challenge for it is how to maintain cooperative relations with the SDP, which does not approve of overseas dispatch of SDF troops.

The DPJ's policy is not to write details in a manifesto for the general election, because it is impossible to know the details of diplomatic affairs until it takes the reins of government, as Policy Research Council Chairman Masayuki Naoshima put it. In connection with the realignment of US forces in Japan, the DPJ mapped out an Okinawa Vision in July, in which it proposed the overseas transfer of the U.S. Marine Corps' bases. However, this proposal will unlikely be included in the manifesto.

Regarding what approach the DPJ will make to the Obama administration, Deputy President Naoto Kan during a press conference on the 6th said, "It is possible to rebuild a deep bilateral alliance by clearly conveying the wishes of the party in power, without depending on the Foreign Ministry for diplomacy."

4) LDP's Machimura: Japan's DPJ different from U.S. Democratic Party

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
November 7, 2008

Referring to Japan's Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) expectation of a tailwind for its plan to take over the reins of government now that Barack Obama has been elected president of the United States, many members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in faction meetings expressed the view that the DPJ was getting carried away.

Former Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura, who heads one faction, said: "The (Japanese) Democratic Party is getting carried away by the word 'change,' as I expected. The party has placed Mr. Obama's poster on the wall of its office in the Diet building." Former Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura, who heads another faction, made a cynical comment: "The (DPJ and the U.S. Democratic Party) have only one thing in common, the campaign slogan 'change'."

The LDP is concerned that the change in U.S. administration could affect Japanese public opinion. Machimura sought to constrain the media, noting: "I remember that (the media) often used the words 'reformists' and 'old guard conservatives,' when the Hosokawa administration was inaugurated." Since the House of Representatives

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will be dissolved for a general election within a year, it can be expected that LDP officials will be bothered both by the moves of the DPJ and U.S. Democratic Party.

5) Abe criticizes removal of North Korea from terrorist blacklist as wrong step

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Full)
November 7, 2008

Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of the Liberal Democratic Party, appearing on an Asahi NewStar program yesterday, criticized the U.S. delisting of North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism. He said: "It was the wrong step. The abduction and nuclear issues can be settled only with the pressure and dialogue approach with an emphasis on pressure."

6) Tamogami to be summoned by Upper House panel on Nov. 11

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)
November 7, 2008

The House of Councillors Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee unanimously decided yesterday to summon Toshio Tamogami, ex-Air Self-Defense Force chief of staff, to the Diet as an unsworn witness on Nov. 11. The Democratic Party of Japan will question him about why Tamogami applied for the essay contest and his view on wartime history. The main opposition party is also poised to pursue the coalition government's responsibility for appointing Tamogami and to ask about the actual state of civilian control.

7) Senior ASDF members, mostly at Komatsu Air Base, sent essays under instruction of Tamogami

ASAHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
November 7, 2008

Toshio Tamogami was dismissed as Air Self-Defense Force chief of staff over his essay justifying Japan's war role. Through an investigation into this case by the Defense Ministry, it was found yesterday that Air Wing 6 at Komatsu Air Base in Ishikawa Prefecture had given instructions to its senior members on "true modern history," the theme of the contest in which Tamogami's essay won a prize.

Tamogami commanded Air Wing 6 at the Komatsu base from 1998 through 1999. During this period, he recommended officers to apply for the contest. The ministry has revealed that 78 ASDF officers sent essays to the contest. Of them, 62 belong to Air Wing 6.

The contest was organized by the APA Group, a condominium developer, to celebrate the publication of the book Unreported Modern History authored by group President Toshio Motoya.

According to the ministry, the Air Staff Office's Education Division encouraged officers across the nation in May to write an essay for the contest, saying, "Writing an essay would help your training." Around this time, the air wing gives instructions to its members about how to write an essay. This year, the instructor reportedly cited the theme of the contest for teaching. According to the Komatsu base, the wing had screened the papers just before they were sent.

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Motoya reportedly comes from Komatsu and chairs the Komatsu Air Base

Kanazawa Tomo-no-kai. Tamogami reportedly was an acquaintance of Motoya when he commanded Air Wing 6.

8) Tamogami scandal causes wide repercussions; Upper House committee to summon ex-ASDF chief on Nov. 11

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Abridged)
November 7, 2008

The stir created by the dismissal of Toshio Tamogami from the post of Air Self-Defense Force chief of staff over his essay conflicting with the government's view of history is continuing to widen. The Upper House Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which is discussing a bill extending the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, decided yesterday to summon Tamogami to the committee on Nov. 11 as an unsworn witness. The opposition camp is set to pursue the government's responsibility, raising questions about the appropriateness of the Defense Ministry's set of procedures leading up to Tamogami's retirement and about a possible systematic involvement.

Opposition camp to pursue government's responsibility for appointing Tamogami to post

Before the Upper House Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday, Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada criticized Tamogami for the essay that ran counter to the government's position: "It is an extremely serious problem for a person in a top post to state a view irrespective of his position." In 1995, then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama released a statement offering an apology by acknowledging Japan's aggression and colonial rule. The essay by Tamogami who headed the ASDF drew outcries from China and South Korea, countries that are sensitive to the matter, forcing the government to explain that Japan's standpoint remained the same.

The Democratic Party of Japan and other opposition parties are set to pursue the government's responsibility for appointing Tamogami as ASDF chief of staff. Tamogami wrote in an ASDF journal in the past, "Our country's history and traditions have been accused falsely of crimes under the postwar education system." He has also repeatedly made similar statements in his speeches. His reference to the need to relax the constitutionally prohibited use of the right to collective self-defense and the weapons-use standards has also been regarded as a problem in that it transcends the government's view.

Defense Ministry's treatment of Tamogami under fire

The DPJ plans to grill the Defense Ministry for allowing Tamogami to retire under the age limit instead of giving him a disciplinary dismissal. The ministry urged Tamogami to accept disciplinary action without undergoing time-consuming deliberations. But Tamogami indicated that he would fight, saying, "I want to discuss the matter thoroughly." As a result, the ministry decided to retire him, the quickest step. The government will pay him about 60 million yen as a retirement allowance.

Prime Minister Taro Aso, speaking to the press corps at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday, supported the Defense Ministry's decision. In yesterday's foreign and defense committee meeting, DPJ member Yukihiisa Fujita asked: "Why didn't the ministry give him a

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disciplinary dismissal?" DPJ Upper House Caucus Chairman Azuma Koshiishi also said in a press conference: "I want to ask if the ministry wanted to put an early end to the scandal."

Systematic involvement suspected; 78 ASDF members sent essays to the contest

Some DPJ members are suspecting systematic involvement. It has become clear that 78 ASDF personnel had submitted essays to the contest in question. Of them, 62 were attached to the 6th Air Wing at Komatsu Air Base headed by Tamogami. The contest was organized by the hotel and condominium developer APA Group to solicit essays under the theme of "true views of modern history." Tamogami was on friendly terms with the group's representative. Tamogami admitted

that he had introduced the essay contest to his subordinates.

The Air Wing ordered its members to write essays for educating senior officers. The Air Staff Office's Education Division informed ASDF troops across the nation of the essay contest as helpful for brainstorming.

Tamogami's failure to report on his essay in writing has exposed the lax screening system. To ensure civilian control, the DPJ plans to submit to the Upper House a bill amending the SDF Law requiring Diet approval for the appointments of SDF chiefs of staff. Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura said: "It is necessary to reconsider how civilian control should be carried out."

9) Ex-ASDF chief Tamogami on friendly terms with APA Group president for 10 years

ASAHI (Page 39) (Full)
November 7, 2008

Toshio Tamogami, who was dismissed over his essay that justified Japan's war role, has been on friendly terms with Toshio Motoya, president of the condominium developer APA Group, for 10 years, as seen from his attendance in a party to celebrate the publication of his book. The group organized the essay content in which Tamogami won a prize.

Motoya comes from Komatsu, Ishikawa Prefecture. He became friends with Tamogami when Tamogami was the commander of an air wing at Komatsu Air Base from 1998 through 1999. Motoya set up the Komatsu Air Base Kanazawa Friendship Group, joined by local political and business leaders in 1999. He chairs the association and plays a mediatory role between base staff and local people.

Their friendship has continued even after Tamogami was transferred to another base. In talks between Mr. and Mrs. Motoya and political or business leaders carried serially in the magazine Apple Town also placed at the lobbies in the hotels operated by the APA Group, Tamogami appeared several times. Tamogami in uniform showed up in a party this June to celebrate the publication of the book Unreported Modern History authored by Motoya.

Motoya boarded an F-15 fighter as the first civilian at Komatsu Air Base in August 2007. A picture taken at that time is carried in Motoya's book. An information unit officer at the ASDF Staff Office explained: "As part of our publicity activities, we asked him as chairman of the Komatsu Air Base Kanazawa Friendship Group to board the fighter."

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In reply to a question by the Asahi Shimbun, Motoya said he had never asked Tamogami to write an essay for the contest. He remarked: "He might have known about the essay contest in the Apple Town magazine, which I send him every month. I had not expected the ASDF chief of staff would apply in the contest." The essay of Tamogami was sent in August. A total of 235 essays, including those sent from other ASDF officers reportedly were screened while concealing the names of writers. As a result of the screening, Tamogami's essay won the competition's 3 million yen top prize.

10) Government to propose additional IMF capital replenishment at upcoming financial summit

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
November 7, 2008

The government on November 6 decided to propose expanding the International Monetary Fund's capital replenishment at the financial summit to be held in Washington on the 15th. It is looking into a plan for countries like Japan and China to lend portions of their rich foreign currency reserves to the IMF.

The aim is to halt the cascade of the financial turmoil by strengthening an assistance framework in readiness for a possible need for a large sum of funds in the event of emerging countries,

small and medium-sized countries, for instance, finding it necessary to inject public funds into financial institutions.

The IMF has 200 billion dollars (approximately 20 trillion yen) at hand for emergency loans. However, since it has already received loan requests from many European countries, it could run short of funds. For this reason, Prime Minister Aso will appeal on the need to secure ample funds for the IMF as a safety net to prevent countries from going bankrupt.

11) Japan, China, South Korea to confer on expansion of fund interchanging framework

ASAHI (Page 12) (Full)
November 7, 2008

Former Vice Finance Minister for International Financial Affairs Toyoo Gyoten and former Vice Finance Minister Yoshiji Nogami, who visited South Korea on November 6 as special envoys of Prime Minister Aso met with Strategy and Finance Minister Kang Man Soo in Seoul and agreed to deepen cooperation among Japan, China and South Korea in dealing with a financial crisis. The three countries will aim to expand the "Chiang Mai Initiative," an agreement under which they reciprocally supply funds in advance in readiness for a currency crisis, over the next three months.

Under the Chiang Mai Initiative, signatory countries loan funds to the other country from their own foreign reserves in the event of the other country facing such crises as currency plunges. The frameworks for such loans are 21 billion dollars (approximately 2.06 trillion yen) between Japan and South Korea, 8 billion dollars between China and South Korea and 6 billion dollars between Japan and China. China and South Korea have already signed such an agreement under another framework. Japan will promote talks with South Korea and China to strengthen a financial relationship among the three countries. They want to materialize the plan by the

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trilateral summit to be held in Fukuoka in December.

According to a briefing by the Japanese side, concerning cooperation among the three countries, Kang said, "It is necessary for the three countries to strengthen a system of reciprocally supplying necessary funds in the event of a financial crisis." The Japanese participants agreed to do so and handed to Kang Prime Minister Aso's letter addressed to President Lee Myung Bak.

12) 12,000 join JCP since September last year, 30 PERCENT of new members are young people

AKAHATA (Page 1) (Excerpts)
November 7, 2008

During the period between September 2007 and October 2008, 12,000 persons joined the Japanese Communist Party (JCP). The JCP held the 5th convention of its Central Committee in September last year. About 30 PERCENT of the 12,000 are those who are in their teens, twenties and thirties.

Many of the 12,000 said that they joined the JCP to change society, which "treats young people as disposable." In Chiba Prefecture, many farmers became JCP members, with one saying: "In order to revitalize agriculture, politics must change." In defiance of the controversial health insurance system for those aged 75 and older, people in their sixties and seventies joined the JCP.

A 22-year-old male member, who had taken part in the Oct. 5 national youth rally, said: "Japanese politics is at the beck and call of the United States. That is a fundamental factor in a society in which people have difficulty making a living. I want to make a society into one in which it is easy for the socially weak to live. After watching JCP Chairman Kazuo Shii's questioning in the Diet, a young man, a factory contract employee, visited a JCP office in Kanagawa Prefecture to join the party. He said: "I want to change the abnormal working conditions."

In order to find bright prospects for social change, many people joined the JCP. A 26-year-old man, a resident of Saitama Prefecture, said: "I read Karl Marx's books while being hospitalized from overwork. I was deeply moved by the JCP, which has made efforts for the socially weak and opposed the war of aggression."

SCHIEFFER